

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

26TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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BEST BUY SITE AWARDED \$1 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) today announced that the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) has awarded \$1 million to Tioga County, the Tioga County Industrial Development Agency, and the Town of Nichols for infrastructure improvements to the Lounsberry Industrial Park. The improvements are necessary to accommodate the new Best Buy distribution center, which has promised to hire 400 employees within the center's first five years.

"This is great news for the Town of Nichols, Tioga County and the economy of the Southern Tier," said Hinchey. "Four hundred new jobs will provide a tremendous boost, not just for the construction workers and the new Best Buy employees, but for many area businesses. This grant represents a big step in completing this important project."

About two thirds of the grant will be used to build three thousand feet of new sewer line and a new wastewater facility. The remainder will go toward the repaving of a county road that provides access from Route 17 and the creation of a new 5000-foot county road to be called Berry Road. Both roads will be upgraded to handle tractor-trailer traffic.

Hinchey has worked closely with Tioga County on the Best Buy site. In order to build the distribution center, Best Buy needed to obtain a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers by demonstrating that it would not infringe on environmentally sensitive areas. Hinchey worked with the county, Best Buy, and the Army Corps of Engineers to ensure that the permitting process was prompt and thorough. He announced the permit approval in June. In August he visited the site to meet with contractors and developers and to assess infrastructure needs. He has maintained steady contact with the EDA to facilitate the grant approval process.

"We think this is fantastic news, not only for Nichols, but also for the entire county," said Jim Branston, Supervisor of the Town of Nichols. "This investment will help create jobs far beyond the immediate Best Buy project. It will also provide important infrastructure which will benefit many residents in the town of Nichols."

"This is a very important project for Tioga County," said Peter Ward, Chairman of the Tioga County Legislature. "We appreciate all the help we can get."